(b) The salient features of the programme are; (i) it is being implemented as a 100% Centrally-Sponsored Scheme, (ii) foodgrains are also provided to the States free of cost, (iii) the transportation cost, handling charges, and taxes on foodgrains are the responsibility of the States, (iv) works to be taken up under the programme in accordance with the Five Year Perspective Plan, (v) Collector will be the nodal officer for preparation of the Perspective Plan and programme implementation, (vi) wages to workers shall not be less than notified Minimum Wages, (vii) wages to be paid through a mix of cash and foodgrains, and (viii) focus of the programme will be on works relating to water conservation, drought proofing (including afforestation/tree plantation), land development, flood-control/protection (including drainage in waterlogged areas) and rural connectivity in terms of all-weather roads.

(c) The programme has already been launched from November, 2004 and Rs. 2020 crore as cash component and 20 lakh tonnes of foodgrains have been allocated during the current year. Against the allocation, an amount of Rs. 2019 crore and entire allocated quantity of 20 lakh tonnes of foodgrains have been released to all the selected 150 Districts.

National Fund under EGS

†2451. SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ: Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a proposal to set up national fund under 'Employment Guarantee Scheme';

(b) what will be the initial amount in this fund;

(c) the manner in which financial resources would be mobilized for the said national fund;

(d) the details of the authority which would control this national fund; and

(e) whether CAG and Department related Parliamentary Standing Committee on finance would be authorized to do auditing of the said fund?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI SURYAKANTA PATIL): (a) to (d) National Rural Employment Guarantee Bill (NREGB) 2004 was introduced in the Lok Sabha on 21.12.2004. The Bill has been referred to the Standing Committee on Rural Development by the Hon'ble Speaker of the Lok Sabha

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

for its examination and recommendations. Clause 20 of the NREG Bill provides for the following:

"(1) The Central Government shall, by notification, establish a fund to be called the National Employment Guarantee Fund for the purposes of this Act.

(2) The Central Government may, after due appropriation made by Parliament by law in this behalf, credit by way of grants or loans such sums of money as the Central Government may consider necessary to the National Fund.

(3) The amount standing to be credit of the National Fund shall be utilized in such manner and subject to such conditions and limitations as may be prescribed by the Central Government."

(e) Clause 24(1) of the Bill provides that the Central Govt. may, in consultation with the Comptroller and Auditor General of India, prescribed appropriate arrangements for audits of the accounts of the scheme at all levels.

Employment opportunities under EGS

†2452. SHRIMATI MAYA SINGH: Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the number of opportunities of employments provided through the Employment Guarantee Scheme;

(b) the nature of such opportunities of employment;

(c) whether the opportunities of employment provided under the scheme are permanent; and

(d) the details of per capita/per day income generated through such opportunities of employment?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI SURYAKANTA PATIL): (a) to (c) The National Rural Employment Guarantee Bill, 2004 introduced in the Lok Sabha on 21.12.2004 provides for atleast 100 days of guaranteed wage employment in every financial year to rural poor households, whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work, in areas where the proposed legislation will be applicable.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.